

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Amended) A method of bill payment service for a customer, comprising:
- receiving identification information for the customer by a retail system application in response to an automatic prompt of the customer by the retail system application;
 - automatically verifying the identification information by the retail system application and handing off the customer and the identification information to a bill payment application;
 - receiving a customer selection of one of a touch tone mode and a voice mode of communication in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;
 - receiving a customer selection of a bill payment option from a group of bill payment options consisting of a recurring bill payment option, an add or change payee for bill payment option, a single bill payment option, and a status, change or cancel bill payment option, in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;
 - automatically, non-optionally handing off the customer to a customer service representative by the bill payment application for a non-automated verification of the customer's identification by the customer service representative at a telephone as a security measure, if the customer selection is received for one of the recurring bill payment option and the add or change payee for bill payment option;
 - receiving a customer selection of an option to designate a payee from one of a customer-specific payee identification list of the customer and a common payee list provided by the bill payment application, in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;
 - receiving a customer selection of an option to designate the payee by one of entering a payee ID by the customer from the customer-specific payee identification list and selecting the payee from the customer-specific payee identification list spoken by the bill payment application, if the option to designate the payee from the customer-specific payee identification list is received;
 - receiving information about a payment amount for at least one bill payment for the customer by the bill payment application in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;
 - receiving information about a payment date for the bill payment by the bill payment application in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;
 - automatically scheduling the bill payment by the bill payment application for the customer according to the bill payment information;

receiving a confirmation of the payee, the payment amount, and the payment date for the scheduled bill payment by the bill payment application in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application; and

rendering the scheduled bill payment to the payee by the bill payment application for the customer by one of a check and an electronic transfer of funds to the designated payee on the payment date indicated by the customer.

2-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the selection for one of the touch tone and voice modes of communication further comprises receiving a selection for the voice mode of communication for the customer.

14. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 13, wherein receiving the selection for the voice mode of communication further comprises receiving bill payment information for the customer in the voice mode by the bill payment application.

15. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the selection for one of the touch tone and voice modes of communication further comprises receiving a selection for the touch tone mode of communication.

16. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein receiving the selection for the touch tone mode of communication further comprises receiving bill payment information for the customer in the touch tone mode by the bill payment application.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the customer selection of the bill payment option further comprises receiving an election for the recurring bill payment option for the customer by the bill payment application.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the customer selection of the bill payment option further comprises receiving an election for the add or change a payee for bill payment option for the customer by the bill payment application.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the customer selection of the bill payment option further comprises receiving an election for the single bill payment option for the customer by the bill payment application.

23. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the customer selection of the bill payment option further comprises receiving an election for the status, change or cancel bill payment option for the customer by the bill payment application.

24-29. (Cancelled)

30. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the customer selection of the option to designate the payee by entering the payee ID from the customer-specific payee identification list further comprises receiving an ID number for the payee from the customer's payee ID list by the bill payment application.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30, wherein receiving the ID number for the payee further comprises automatically identifying the payee by the bill payment application according to the ID number for the payee.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the customer selection of the option to designate the payee by selecting the payee from the customer-specific payee identification list spoken by the bill payment application further comprises receiving a selection of the payee for the customer from the spoken payee list by the bill payment application.

34. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 33, wherein receiving the selection of the payee for the customer from the spoken customer-specific payee list further comprise automatically identifying the payee by the bill payment application according to the selection.

35. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the customer selection of the option to designate the payee from the common payee list provided by the bill payment application further comprises receiving a selection of the payee for the customer from the common payee list spoken by the bill payment application.

36. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 35, wherein receiving the selection of the payee for the customer from the spoken common payee list further comprises automatically identifying the payee by the bill payment application according to the selection.

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37-43. (Cancelled)

44. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein automatically scheduling the bill payment further comprises automatically assigning a payment reference for the scheduled bill payment by the bill payment application.

45. (Original) The method of claim 44, wherein automatically assigning the payment reference further comprises automatically furnishing the payment reference for the scheduled bill payment to the customer by the bill payment application.

46. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein automatically scheduling the bill payment further comprises automatically summarizing bill payments scheduled for the customer by the bill payment application.

47. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein automatically summarizing bill payments further comprises automatically prompting the customer by the bill payment application for a selection by the customer to hear a list of bill payments scheduled for the customer.

48. (Original) The method of claim 47, wherein automatically summarizing bill payments further comprises automatically speaking the list of bill payments scheduled for the customer in response to the selection by the customer to hear the list of bill payments.

49-50. (Cancelled)

51. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein rendering the scheduled bill payment by check further comprises combining the scheduled bill payment with at least one additional bill payment in the check.

52-54. (Cancelled)

55. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the selection for the status, change or cancel bill payment option further comprises receiving a selection by the customer from one of a group of selections consisting of status of future bill payments for the customer, change a future bill payment for the customer, and cancel a future bill payment for the customer.

56. (Original) The method of claim 55, wherein receiving the selection from the group of selections further comprises receiving the selection in response to an automatic prompt of the customer by the bill payment application for the selection.

57. (Original) The method of claim 55, wherein receiving the selection from the group of selections further comprises receiving a selection by the customer for the status of future bill payments for the customer.

58. (Original) The method of claim 57, wherein receiving the selection for the status of future bill payments further comprises receiving a selection for the customer for one of status of all open bill payments for the customer and status of all bill payments for the customer.

59. (Original) The method of claim 58, wherein receiving the selection further comprises receiving the selection for the status of all open bill payments for the customer.

60. (Original) The method of claim 59, wherein receiving the selection for the status of all open bill payments further comprises automatically speaking the status of all open bill payments for the customer.

61. (Original) The method of claim 58, wherein receiving the selection further comprises receiving the selection for the status of all bill payments for the customer.

62. (Original) The method of claim 61, wherein receiving the selection for the status of all bill payments further comprises automatically speaking the status of all bill payments for the customer.

63. (Original) The method of claim 55, wherein receiving the selection from the group of selections further comprises receiving a selection by the customer for the change of a future bill payment for the customer.

64. (Original) The method of claim 63, wherein receiving the selection for the change of a future bill payment further comprises receiving a selection for the customer for one of change a single bill payment for the customer and change a recurring bill payment for the customer.

65. (Original) The method of claim 64, wherein receiving the selection further comprises receiving the selection for the change of a single bill payment for the customer.

66. (Original) The method of claim 65, wherein receiving the selection for the change of a single bill payment for the customer further comprises receiving bill payment change information for the customer in response to automatic prompts of the customer by the bill payment application.

67. (Original) The method of claim 64, wherein receiving the selection further comprises receiving the selection for change of a recurring bill payment for the customer.

68. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 67, wherein receiving the selection for the change of a recurring bill payment for the customer further comprises automatically handing off the customer to a customer service representative by the bill

payment application for a non-automated verification of the customer's identification by the customer service representative at a telephone.

69. (Original) The method of claim 55, wherein receiving the selection from the group of selections further comprises receiving a selection for the customer for cancellation of a future bill payment for the customer.

70. (Original) The method of claim 69, wherein receiving the selection for the cancellation of a future bill payment for the customer further comprises receiving a selection for the customer for one of cancellation of a single bill payment for the customer and cancellation of a recurring bill payment for the customer.

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71. (Original) The method of claim 70, wherein receiving the selection further comprises receiving a selection for the cancellation of a single bill payment for the customer.

72. (Original) The method of claim 71, wherein receiving the selection for the cancellation of a single bill payment further comprises receiving single bill payment cancellation information for the customer in response to automatic prompts of the customer by the bill payment application for the information.

73. (Original) The method of claim 70, wherein receiving the selection further comprises receiving a selection for cancellation of a recurring bill payment for the customer.

74. (Original) The method of claim 73, wherein receiving the selection further comprises receiving recurring bill payment cancellation information for the customer in response to automatic prompts of the customer by the bill payment application for the information.

75. (Previously Amended) A system for bill payment service for a customer, comprising:

means for receiving identification information for the customer by a retail system application in response to an automatic prompt of the customer by the retail system application;

means for automatically verifying the identification information by the retail system application and handing off the customer and the identification information to a bill payment application;

means for receiving a customer selection of one of a touch tone mode and a voice mode of communication in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;

means for receiving a customer selection a bill payment option from a group of bill payment options consisting of a recurring bill payment option, an add or change payee for bill payment option, a single bill payment option, and a status, change or cancel bill payment option, in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;

means for automatically handing off the customer to a customer service representative by the bill payment application for a non-automated verification of the customer's identification by the customer service representative at a telephone, if the customer selection is received for one of the recurring bill payment option and the add or change payee for bill payment option;

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means for receiving a customer selection of an option to designate a payee from one of a customer-specific payee identification list of the customer and a payee list spoken for the customer by the bill payment application, in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;

means for receiving a customer selection of an option to designate the payee by one of entering a payee ID by the customer from the customer-specific payee identification list and selecting the payee from the customer-specific payee identification list spoken by the bill payment application, if the option to designate the payee from the customer-specific payee identification list is received;

means for receiving a payment amount for at least one bill payment for the customer by the bill payment application in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;

means for receiving a payment date for the bill payment by the bill payment application in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;

means for automatically scheduling the bill payment by the bill payment application for the customer according to the bill payment information;

means for receiving a confirmation of the payee, the payment amount, and the payment date for the scheduled bill payment by the bill payment application in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application; and

means for rendering the scheduled bill payment by the bill payment application to a payee for the customer by one of a check and an electronic transfer of funds to the designated payee on the payment date indicated by the customer.

76. (Previously Amended) The system of claim 75, further comprising the bill payment application running on a server.

77. (Previously Amended) The system of claim 76, further comprising the retail system application communicating with the bill payment application.

78. (Previously Amended) The system of claim 76, further comprising an input device coupled to the server.

79. (Previously Amended) The system of claim 78, wherein the input device further comprises a telephone.

80-81. (Cancelled)

82. (Previously Added) A method of bill payment service for a customer, comprising:

providing a bill payment application accessible by the customer via a telephonic connection and having a menu of bill payment options;

establishing a condition for non-optional handing off the customer to a customer service representative by the bill payment application for a non-automated verification of the customer's identification by the customer service representative via the telephonic connection as a security measure, said condition consisting at least in part of selection by the customer from the bill payment options for one of a recurring bill payment option and an add or change payee for bill payment option;

allowing the customer to enter at least one selection on the bill payment application from the menu of bill payment options; and

automatically, non-optional handing off the customer to the customer service representative by the bill payment application for non-automated verification of the customer's identification by the customer service representative, if the condition is met by the customer's selection.

83. (Previously Added) A method of bill payment service for a customer, comprising:

- providing a bill payment application accessible by the customer via a telephonic connection and having a menu of bill payment options consisting at least in part of an option to select a payee for a bill payment;
- establishing a common payee list on the bill payment application;
- establishing a customer-specific payee list on the bill payment application according to information provided by the customer; and
- allowing the customer to select the payee for bill payment from one of the customer-specific payee list and the common payee list in response to a prompt by the bill payment application.

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84. (Previously Added) A method of bill payment service for a customer, comprising:

- providing a bill payment application accessible by the customer via a telephonic connection and having a menu of options;
- establishing a common payee list on the bill payment application;
- establishing a customer-specific payee list on the bill payment application according to information provided by the customer;
- establishing a condition for non-optionally handing off the customer to a customer service representative by the bill payment application for a non-automated verification of the customer's identification by the customer service representative via the telephonic connection as a security measure, said condition consisting at least in part of selection by the customer from the menu of options for one of a recurring bill payment option and an add or change payee for bill payment option;
- allowing the customer to enter at least one selection on the bill payment application from the menu of options;
- automatically, non-optionally handing off the customer to the customer service representative by the bill payment application for non-automated verification of the customer's identification by the customer service representative, if the condition is invoked by the customer's selection; and

allowing the customer to select the payee for bill payment from one of the customer-specific payee list and the common payee list in response to a prompt by the bill payment application.

85. (New) A method of bill payment service for a customer, comprising:
 providing a bill payment application accessible by the customer via a telephonic connection and having a menu of bill payment options;
 establishing a common payee list and a customer-specific payee list according to information provided by the customer on the bill payment application;
 establishing a condition for non-optionally handing off the customer to a customer service representative by the bill payment application for a non-automated verification of the customer's identification by the customer service representative via the telephonic connection as a security measure, said condition consisting at least in part of selection by the customer from the menu of options for one of a recurring bill payment option and an add or change payee for bill payment option;

allowing the customer to enter at least one selection on the bill payment application from the menu of bill payment options;

automatically, non-optionally handing off the customer to the customer service representative by the bill payment application for non-automated verification of the customer's identification by the customer service representative, if the condition is invoked by the customer's selection;

receiving a customer selection of an option to designate a payee from one of the common payee list and the customer-specific payee list in response to an automatic prompt by the bill payment application;

receiving a customer designation of the payee by one of entering a payee ID according to the customer specific payee list and selecting the payee from the customer-specific payee list spoken by the bill payment application, if the option to designate the payee from the customer-specific payee list is received; and

receiving a customer designation of the payee by selecting the payee from the common payee list spoken by the bill payment application, if the option to designate the payee from the common payee list is received.